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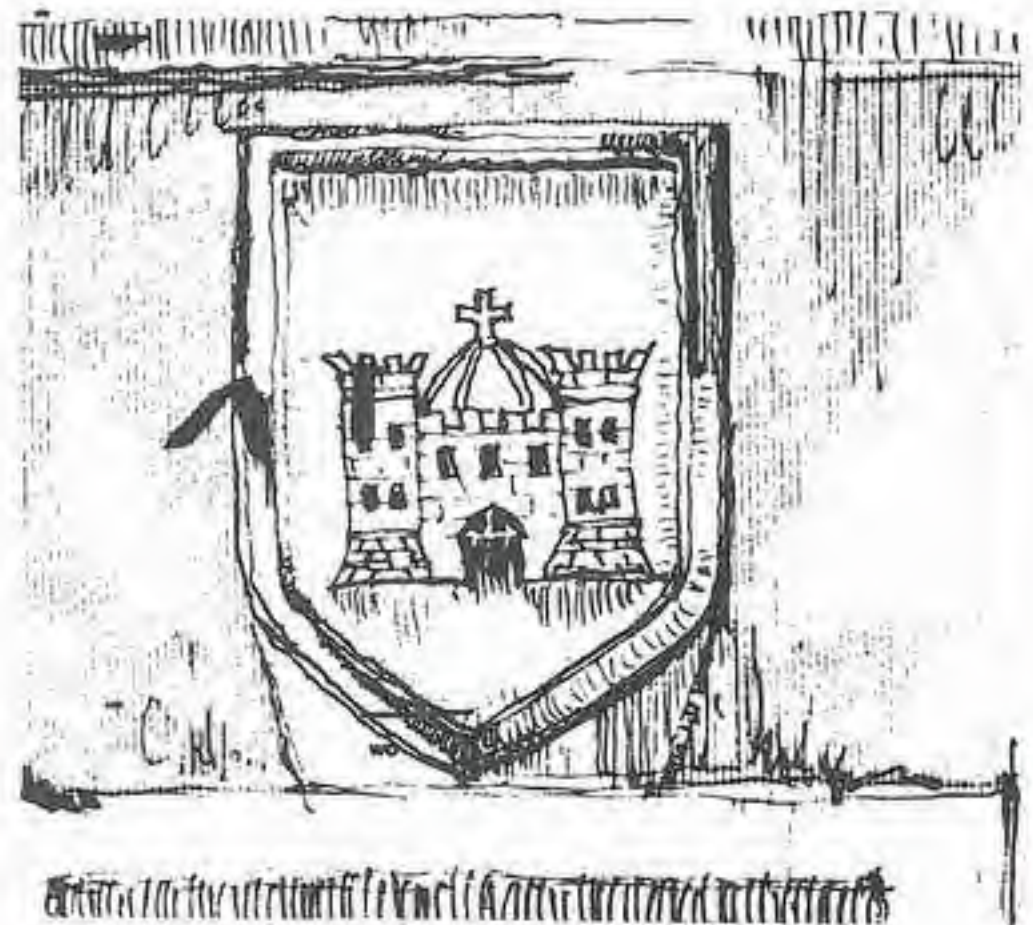
**THE
VOICE
OF THE
WORKER**

'That which is good for the working class I esteem patriotic ...' James Connolly

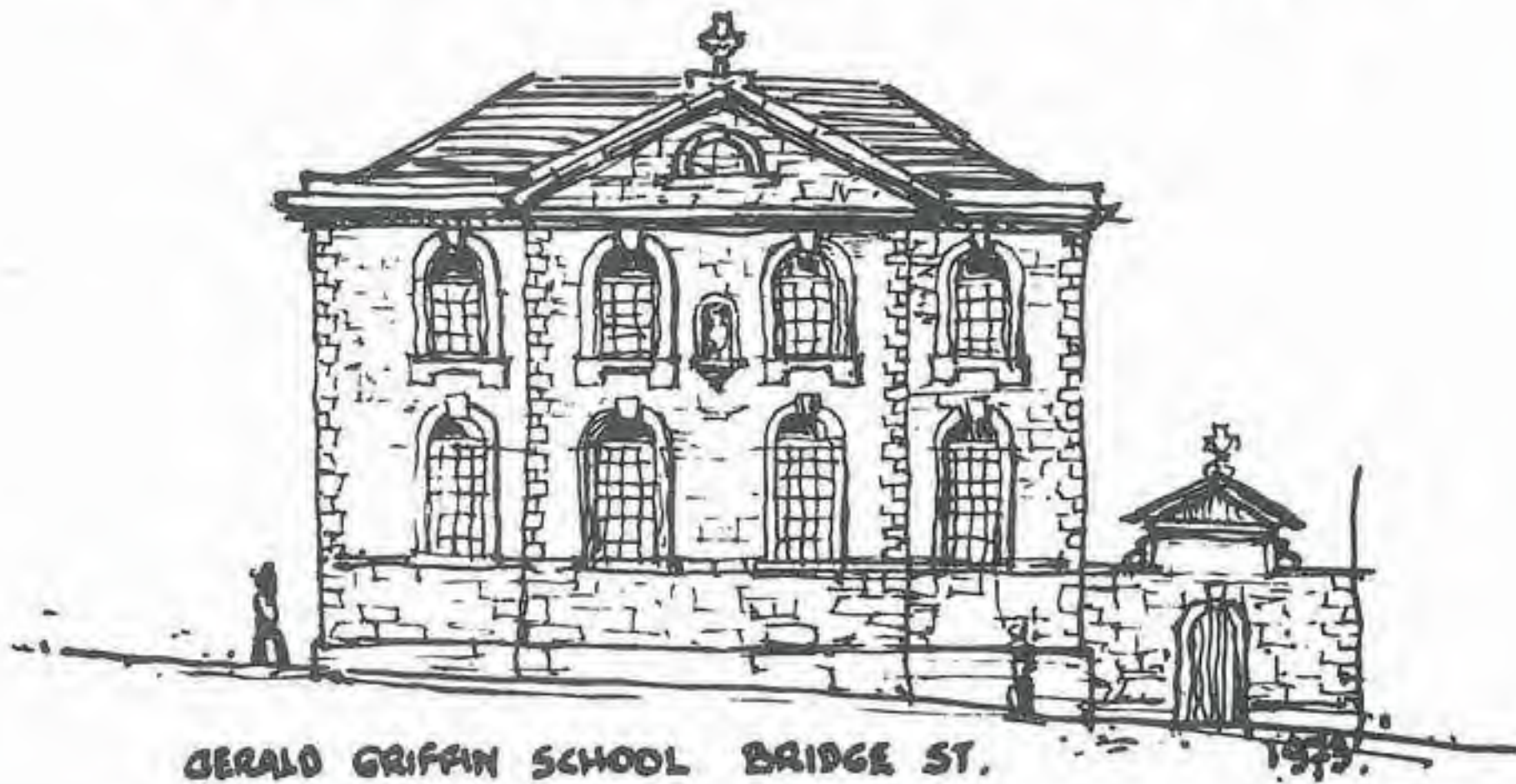
No flies on Fanny



The Fourth Siege of Limerick



THE PARISH PUMP



JACK LOVES CHARLIE

by DERMOT McEVOY

YOU'LL ALL want to know the inside story of the Jack Lynch-Charlie Haughey reconciliation, an event of such moment that all else is forgotten in the places where Irish businessmen meet, hotel lounges, golf clubs, sauna parlours – and Dan Ryan's forecourt. It was told to me in confidence but, of course, that means nothing to me these days. I no longer serve Mammon, so here goes ... Well, Charlie told Jack what he had done with the £100,000 of the taxpayers' money those cupid stunts of the Public Accounts Committee have been kicking up a fuss about: he had given it as a contribution to Paddy Taca and Paddy had bought pints for young and old in a constituency where an upstart man of letters named Cruise O'Brien was trying to get elected. Jack and Charlie and the top rabbit man in Limerick had a good laugh at that.

My informant tells me that Charlie, on his part, promised he'd mention nothing about Jack's unfortunate involvement with Gulf Oil (that's the crowd that flew Jack and his missus to Japan and gave her a bit of jewellery to mark the occasion of letting Gulf have oil-spillage facilities in Bantry Bay). Of course, Gulf got the facilities for next to nothing (the *Sunday Independent* had the cheek to expose that!). I mean Gulf paid nothing to any PUBLIC authority. But could Gulf have paid anything to a private person like, say, Paddy Taca, who'd be a handy fellow to oil the Fianna Fail machine? When you think of your International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation that can – and has – bought entire counties (Chile for one) and the United Fruit Company (Guatemala for another), the buying of the Fianna Fail party would only be a morning's work for second-string executive, not worthy of a Telex to Mr. Geneen, the ITT tarantala at the head of its murderous affairs.

Of course, you are going to tell me I take a jaundiced view of the moral fibre and all that mullarkey of Irish politicians. I do, and I'm not alone in that. Moreover, I claim every qualification. Why I spent my last few years *in partibus* in the Temple of Mammon itself, serving on the *Financial Times*, own high altar whose foundation stone was laid by Brendan Bracken, the Tipperary man with a heart of gold (and little else). In that capacity, I had the pleasure of meeting a Thomas J. O'Hanlon, an editor of *Fortune* magazine (the U.S. Big Businessman's Bible). O'Hanlon, in his new book "The Irish" (Harper & Row, New York), mentions that an Irish Cabinet Minister in the 1960's made a fortune by property speculation. He adds, quite unnecessarily you'd think, that the profits were tax-free. (God Almighty, any Christian Brothers' boy will tell you that if you're an Irish Cabinet Minister you don't tax your own profits!) Political corruption, O'Hanlon goes on, was far worse in Ireland – he is referring to the high noon of Lynch-Haughey days – than in Tammany Hall in its heyday: corruption is condoned because "pull" is everything and the tax-structure loaded in favour of the rich.

This O'Hanlon, of course, is probably an anti-cleric. He also writes: "Much of the choice land around Dublin is the property of the Church ... Only a handful of the clergy have ever visited the festering slums of Dublin".

But Champagne Charlie, or whoever that Irish Cabinet Minister was that made his pile tax-free, is only one of many. For instance, there is an ex-TD, now a Fianna Fail Senator waiting in the wings for a General Election and a softer seat (In the interval he's not above drawing a nice few quid as a Brussels sprout), who used to visit Bolingbroke Grove, Wandsworth, in south-west London, to spend some of the loot on hostesses from a near-beer club in Soho run by a broadminded chap named Jimmy Murray. Not that I mind; *chacun a son gout* as the dog said when he kissed his own amethyst. But I do mind when that same Senator, a high-up Fianna Fail-er, denounces with bell-book-and-bullshit a woman Senator's attempt to introduce a sane family-planning scheme into this country. What a hypocrite! An odd circumstance that Jimmy Murray's estranged wife, Margaret, a typist at the British Embassy in Washington, should have a hand blown off

by one of the first I.R.A. letter-bombs when that Fianna Fail Senator could surely have got word through to friends to warn her about the lethal post. Instead, he stood idly by ... but what's a minor mutilation among friends! To paraphrase Kipling: if you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs, perhaps you're the executioner!

In all this chopping and changing and murder and robbery what side is Fianna Fail on? You'd never tell from the public utterances of the party's leaders. It reminds me of a Second World War story of a British Army officer walking along Whitehall to keep an appointment and asking a Foreign Office official, "Excuse me, can you tell me which side the War Office is on?". "Ours, I hope", said the diplomat fervently. I trust that the people can continue to say the same about Jack Lynch's party and the Ministry of Justice. But I take leave to doubt it.

But how are you getting on since the Budget? Saving energy, I trust, as you're recommended to do in those newspaper and Radio Telefis Eireann advertisements. Being unemployed is, of course, one way of saving energy and in that respect your average man in the street in the city of Limerick is, so to speak, doing his bit. Not that it helps much when all those company-owned cars are still running on expensive petrol and adding to the nation's trading deficit and, DON'T YOU FORGET IT, adding to the cost of everything you buy, every service you use. A simple clause in Richie Ryan's Budget could have disallowed the cost of this petrol as an Income Tax deduction in company accounts. But there hasn't been a squawk about it from Fine Gael, Fianna Fail or your own Stevie Coughlan. Similarly, I find petrol stations, lounge bars outside advertising signs, banks and supermarkets all lit up as if energy came from heaven. And not a word of protest from platform or pulpit!

If Ireland were Spain I could understand the pulpit silence. I find that in Pamplona in Spain eleven priests were fined for preaching sermons that supported workers during a recent strike. The fines, "for attacking fundamental principles and structures of the State" ranged from £40 to £4,000. The sermons demanded the right of workers to assemble freely and criticised the abuse of State power. How many priests of St. Alphonsus's have recently spoken out about the plight of the Limerick workless? How many have even risked a fine – or won a cheer? The answer is – none.

Indeed, how many local priests have spoken out against the encouragement to sin contained in Richie Ryan's Budget. A woman writer in the *Irish Independent* worked out that a man and a woman, say a teacher and a Guard who earn £40 a week each, will pay, thanks to Mr. Ryan, about £8 a week MORE in Income Tax if they get married than if they decide to have it off without benefit of clergy. It's a topsy-turvy world, I tell you. And I'm not inventing the figures. But there are so many inequities in this our Ireland I could fill columns for you. What can YOU do about it? Get together, meet and march and shout and vote only for the men who will pledge themselves to right these patent injustices. Distrust and cynicism have gone far, but we are not yet over the precipice. Fight and fight again be your '75 resolution. But resolution it has got to be.

But not to end on too sombre a note. How has the Budget affected me? Not a bit. For everything I fancy, as Alexander Woollacott used to say, is either illegal, immoral or fattening.

ANTI-PASTORAL LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Ex-Brother backs Matt

BROTHER – The form of address is that favoured among trade unionists and not because I have mistaken you for a member of a teaching congregation apparently expelled from your locality by a prelate who also distinguished himself by excommunicating a journalist who told the truth – (how impossible this would be in my country, where no journalist has ever been caught out telling the truth or any such similar foolhardiness). Since the man chucked out of the Church by Bishop O'Dwyer was, like my own father, decorated for his soldierly services to Great Britain in the 1914–18 war, the bishop's act would presumably be approved by the Provost!

However, I digress. I wish to take issue with my good friend and ex-colleague of the old *Daily Herald* days on one or two points. On the canonisation of Oliver Plunkett, Dermot McEvoy says he is indebted to "Rev. James Good", whom he calls "Father" though he writes like a Protestant, quoting Voltaire in "an imaginary but correct" – how's that for a contradiction in terms? – "reconstruction" of Plunkett's role in the Inquisition. Surely it is established historical fact that the worst excesses of the Inquisition were committed in Spain without Papal knowledge or approval and the "Rev. James Good" offers no evidence at all of any tortures or burnings at stakes authorised or condoned by Oliver Plunkett.

In this context, I feel McEvoy would be honouring the memory of his truth-telling father better by being more concerned with facts than scoring easy points against the Irish Hierarchy. Does anyone seriously believe that the Holy Father cares a jot about the revenue of the Italian Tourist Board? Glory be, I'd have thought there'd have been more words from Dermot about a hero and a saint who gets just a passing reference, namely Matt Talbot. A "scab"? Would that I could be such a scab!

A final word on the Oliver Plunkett issue: if McEvoy can appoint himself Coadjutor for Limerick and issue a pastoral letter then I can make myself, in these days of ecumenism-running-wild, the *judex contra haersim* for England and Wales – and hereby do. There'll be no more "youth Masses" with strumming guitars and "Sally" Army tambourines and, indeed, the vernacular Mass is abolished on this island and Latin restored as the norm.

* * * *

As *Judex contra haersim* for England and Wales I am denied the pleasure of being splenetic towards my Irish fellow-journalist as he is outside my jurisdiction. I'll aim the spleen, instead, as Press baron Rupert Murdoch, who may well have a notion for a knighthood since that well-known exemplar of chivalry and Christian honour, Hugh Cudlipp, got tapped on the shoulder by the monarch's sword. Murdoch's unctuous and hypocritical *News of the World* has been claiming credit for the comeuppance of a number of Maltese ponces who are now in the enforced company of a different type of screw from the ones that made them a fortune.

It's a fact that Murdoch employs muscle-bound fellow Aussies for the harassment of prostitutes. It's a funny thing that since the Maltese ring was smashed and a lot of girls put out of business, there's been an influx of Australian ladies in Soho offering erotic delights. Just a coincidence, of course.

Murdoch makes enough out of vice by pretending to "expose" it. Funny, though, how many of these Australian girls there are ...

* * * *

As for heroes, I'll offer readers of the *Limerick Socialist*, Saint Ambrose (paraphrasing from memory): "When you 'give' to the poor you are not in truth 'giving' anything. You are returning to him what you have unlawfully abrogated from him since all belongs to God who has given all to humanity". Which really brings us back to McEvoy's hero – Everyman.

John Aistrop, Fleet St., London.

Note from Coadjutor McEvoy: *Brother Aistrop, or rather ex-Brother since he has left the National Union of Journalists for the lush pickings of the Institute of Journalists, has already achieved Matt Talbot status – as a scab. As regards Blessed Oliver, of course there is no evidence he burned Protestants at the stake; nor is there evidence that Hitler personally tortured Jews: he merely gave it the O.K.*

THE PERMISSIVE LIMERICK – 60 YEARS AGO

BUT the women of Limerick have often been brilliantly beautiful .. and English regiments flirted and courted among them with traditional allure – my memory tells me – and often effectively and even respectably. They must indeed have been an answer to life very often those enemy troops, if not literally an answer to prayer. And one of them, come to think of it, fathered Lola Montez here, in some gay hovel near the docks.

The married women of Limerick – and we had some singularly beautiful ones around at the time I am remembering – were often very gay and gentle with the fairheaded lieutenants and trim captains from 'across'. And one well-instructed school-child watching the comedy in skating-rinks, on tennis-courts, on river picnics and around demure pianos, used to wonder about the rules, about confession and temptation and continence and the queer phrase, 'taking pleasure'. She was often troubled for favourite beautiful ladies who probably did not know her at all, and certainly were unaware of her sneaky and precocious watchfulness. And if the ageing, dimming eyes of any matron of the Limerick *bourgeoisie* should fall on these lines, let no reader protest in virtuous forgetfulness that it was only the loose beauties of the Protestant ascendancy, who enjoyed a military gallop – for she will not be telling the truth. There was a chiel among ye.

("My Ireland" by Kate O'Brien, Pages 29 & 30).

WORDS ... AND DEEDS

THERE is no discernable change in Fine Gael policy that would bridge the many policy gaps between Labour and Fine Gael. We differ from them in such matters as the role of the State, in promoting and managing industry, the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement, anti-trade union legislation, Common Market, the public control of our financial institutions and taxation generally. Fine Gael are a private enterprise party. We are Socialist. It is not sufficient ... merely to get rid of Fianna Fail. The alternative Government must have positive policies to implement immediately it comes into office. The economic and social problems of this country are enormous – the task of ensuring full employment, our premier objective, would call for radical measures ... Our aim is, and always has been, to form a Labour Government. I do not intend to sacrifice that goal and the independence of the party for what may appear as a short-term advantage ... Of the three parties one is superfluous. I don't believe that either Fianna Fail or Fine Gael would suggest it is Labour.

(Brendan Corish, Friday 31st. May, 1968).



THE SIEGE OF 1691

The first siege of Limerick was in 1651 when Cromwell's son-in-law, General Ireton, besieged the city. The second siege occurred in 1690 when William of Orange, having routed King James at the battle of the Boyne, came before Limerick in full force, but being unable to take the city he raised the siege and retired for the winter. The third of Limerick was in 1691 when the city surrendered under terms of a treaty which was broken shortly afterwards.

The highlight of that siege of 1691 was the midnight ride of Patrick Sarsfield. Though of mere secondary rank in the defence of the city, Sarsfield led a troop of horse out of the city by Ballinanty and travelling east towards Keeper Hill arrived at Ballineety. He surprised the English siege train with the password "Sarsfield is the word and Sarsfield is the man" and with nice sword play he sent the escort to join their Williamite ancestors and then spiked their guns.

The cannons in that distant age had a hole in the heavier end of the gun. Into that hole was pushed a red hot poker which ignited the charge and fired the gun. Sarsfield's men hammered home the red-hot pokers and left them there; they then assembled the guns in a circle and, loading the guns with powder, pushed their muzzles into the ground and blasted the lot into orbit. Having accomplished this daring exploit without loss, Sarsfield returned to the city and was acclaimed as an immortal hero.

It is well known in the city and elsewhere that on the signing of the treaty, Sarsfield and his men moved out of the city under arms and marched overland to Doonbeg on the south west coast of Clare, and embarked for France. Had the garrison embarked at Limerick, the Williamite cannon would have blasted them out of the river and any survivors reaching the river bank would have been slaughtered. Sarsfield was aware of this possibility and was wise in the event.

This embarkation at Doonbeg, was called "The Flight of the Wild Geese".

The French fleet of boats which took Sarsfield and his men to France could not come up the river, turn around and go down again except with the wind and tide in their favour. On this account the officers of the French fleet took no chances; they, like Sarsfield, did not trust the English, whose record for treachery and shooting unsuspecting innocents in the back, was well established in that distant age.

SOCIAL LIFE BY THE SHANNON BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR

The commercial and social life of the city depended in part on the river Shannon. There was always a half dozen steamers at berths in the docks, as well as Galway hookers and other sailing craft bringing turf, livestock, and other goods from small ports on the west coast. Also anchored in the river were many cabin cruisers and yachts belonging to city merchants and to some of the landed gentry.

For the large sum of three shillings the ordinary citizen could enjoy a day's excursion on the river, travelling as far as Kilrush on the 200 tons paddle steamer, S.S. Shannon.

This boat was eventually sold and taken to Greece in 1920, her place on the river being taken by another paddle steamer the S.S. Mermaid of 150 tons. This latter boat figured in the Civil War. At various times there were other paddle boats on the river; they always left and returned with the tide in their favour.

The strong membership of the four rowing clubs came from every social class in the city. Many of the working class had

The Fourth Siege of Limerick

rowing boats for their simple pleasures. Five guilds of fishermen fishing limited stretches of the river from Plassey falls to Coonagh had almost one hundred boats between them. Everyone with a rod and line could fish from the Thomond Bridge or from the Sarsfield Bridge without fee or license, but dare not play the fish to the river bank to land his catch, as a bailiff always waited nearby.

The river was so clean and fish were so plentiful that occasional shoals of mackerel came up river with the tide and were fished ashore with landing nets. The last such shoal came up river in 1922.

THE REGATTAS

The annual City Regatta brought competing crews from several boat clubs all over the country. While the competitors displayed their skill on the water, the upper social strata displayed their gents' straw boaters, flannels and binoculars. The ladies displayed their long tailed finery, snubbing their inferiors but bowing with graceful charm to their social equals. The biggest thing on their minds was their hats.

A plebian but far superior and more enjoyable social event was the annual Abbey river regatta, held on a Sunday in August, when the tide was suitable. There were boating and swimming events as well as duck races, dog races and many other comic aquatic novelties. The banks of the river were crowded with spectators, whose voluntary contributions helped to make this regatta the most colourful event on the river.

An annual regatta was also held at Plassey mills but the distance from the city brought a more active and agile attendance. As this regatta was on the upper Shannon it was independent of the tides and was held on any Sunday in August. It could never surpass the Abbey in diversity of interest, as the swift flowing river could be dangerous for aquatic sport, but being two miles from the city it had the attraction of country air and scenery and was held on a wider stretch of river. It was attended by family parties who started out around ten in the morning with ample stocks of food and cooking implements. They made a picnic day of the event. The roaring torrents of water rushing through the broken sluices and tailrace of the ruined Plassey mill gave the place a memorable air of romance and danger. In the afternoon while the children sported or slept in the sun, some parents thirsty for adventure could cross the narrow black bridge to the Clare side of the river. They needed no mariner's compass to swing to the right by the river's bank. Two hundred yards from the bridge and fifty feet from the river, set in green fields, was a small low thatched house of refuge - Shanny's Pub.

Some drank their pints in the pub or outside on benches. Others filled some three-quart tin cans with the flowing gold and drank at leisure amidst the greenery. The ladies of that day could lower a pint or a tot of rum as good as any modern Bingo Belle. By ten at night the banks of the river were almost deserted except for the few poetic strollers enjoying the moonlight reflected on the water.

Plassey mill was built around 1844 and closed down around 1912. When it was being built the stone from the city Watergate was built into the arch over the tailrace or Watergate

of the mill. The stone measured about 30" x 24". A two-inch border enclosed a sunken panel on which was inscribed in free flowing copperplate script "WATERGATE"; beneath this was the inscription "this stone was removed from above the arch of the Watergate when the city walls were demolished".

When Plassey mills were demolished by gelignite in 1954 the stone was safe amongst the rubble and was raised for removal and preservation. Two nights after the demolition, the stone disappeared and has not been seen since then. As it is an historic item, it belongs to the city and is the property of the city Corporation.

THE ROYAL SEWERS

A city prospers or perishes by its sanitary services. From the refuse dump of the earliest known age to the more elaborate systems of a later age, the sanitary system reveals in some measure, the living conditions of that age. In the newer part of the city, Newtown Pery, the sewers were built before a house or block was built; they were eight feet high, over five feet wide and arch roofed. The walls were two feet thick and built of bricks made in the many brickworks on the perimeter of the city. From the sewers two arches led to the basement area of the houses laid on when a block of houses was built. The gorgeously periwigged and beribboned domestic staffs of the houses, entered those arches with the sanitation buckets and emptied them through openings into the sewer. A heavy shower of rain would cause a foot high flood of water to rush through the sewers and clean them; on this account the Corporation workers examining the sewers, could walk the length and breadth of the city in safety and purity of thought without coming above ground.

The Grand Master of this development plan was Sexton Pery.

The sewers followed the plan of the streets and were named after the streets above them. The principal street of the city George Street was called after George IV and the sewer beneath King George. Queen Street was called after Queen Victoria, Her Majesty's generous donation of five pounds towards famine relief in 1848 was gratefully remembered; the sewer beneath was called Queen Victoria as a gesture of esteem of the famine queen. Cornwallis Street was named after Lord Cornwallis; the sewers beneath were named after that former viceroy.

The names of the streets were changed to those of more honoured men but the sewer names were not changed; and so, though they are dead and gone, the names of those Imperial British personalities are immortalised in the sewers of Limerick city. Each day the citizens, with long drawn sighs, shed their tears and donate their tributes to the memory of those long departed but not forgotten regal rulers.

A map of the numbered plots of land and the streets is in the office of a city solicitor and another in the National Museum, Dublin.

Having staked out the ground of the proposed new city, Sexton Pery offered the various plots of land to developers who were assured of an income from the tenants and owners of the houses which were yet to be built. The owners and tenants of those houses ate three square meals each day; they lived, they died and their existence merely polluted the environment; few of them were notable in any way in the history of the city; they were the conventional, formal background against which the history of the city was enacted.

(To be continued).

THIS statement has been submitted to the "Limerick Socialist" by Jack Cantillon, chairman of the People's Co-operative. The Co-operative has been buying meat from farmers, having it butchered, and selling it at cost prices to Southill housewives for the past three months. The stated objective of the scheme is to highlight the excessive profits being made by supermarkets and butchers in Limerick in the sale of meat. While the Co-operative movement is a long way from socialism, the People's Co-operative has to date succeeded to a large degree in its purpose and has provoked the hostility of the Limerick Master Victullars. The statement published below is a reply by the Co-operative to allegations made by the butchers.

The People's Co-operative wishes to reply to a number of erroneous statements made by Mr. John O'Connell, Chairman of the Master Victullars, and published in the local press.

Mr. O'Connell gives the game away in his opening remarks when he states "We are not objecting to the sale of meat as such but these traders (i.e., the People's Co-operative) should be subject to the same stringent controls as we are". He also went on to falsely allege "that meat was being sold from the back of vans and that this was not in itself unhygienic".

It is clear from these statements that the Master Victullars' objections to the work of the People's Co-operative are dishonest and invalid. Most Limerick people will have little difficulty in recalling the strenuous and costly campaign waged by the Limerick Corporation no later than two years ago to force the 44 local members of the Master Victullars to close down their unhygienic slaughter-houses. After a long and legal battle these filthy hovels were eventually closed down and the butchers were forced to use the Dock Road Abattoir.

It ill becomes the Master Victullars to talk about hygiene at this late stage and few people will be fooled by this bogus argument.

The meat sold by the People's Co-operative compares in every possible way with the meat sold by the Limerick butchers. This fact is substantiated by the statements made by

THE PEOPLE'S CO - OPERATIVE

Dr. Tom Barnes, Chief Veterinary Officer, Limerick Corporation.

Mrs. Mary Hayes, another representative of the butchers, stated that "Street traders' meat was being cut up not in registered premises but in private homes and sheds". Again, this is a totally incorrect allegation. The meat being sold by the People's Co-operative is being killed at the abattoir and cut up by qualified butchers.

Another smokescreen raised by Mr. O'Connell was the question of bacteria allegedly arising from the deep-freezing of meat. This charge is completely without foundation, as Dr. Barnes pointed out in the same article. This irresponsible statement has no basis whatsoever in fact. Is Mr. O'Connell saying that the hundreds of thousands of pounds of "Intervention" beef now in deep freeze throughout Europe, is dangerous to health?

The butchers claim that their prices and the prices of the People's Co-operative "should not be compared". This evasion is designed to cloak the vast difference in both sets of prices. The People's Co-operative believes that there is a direct comparison between these prices and in difference shows the excess profits being made by the butchers.

Finally, Mr. O'Connell has the effrontery to conclude with the statement "We have a superior article to offer".

It is said that the proof of the pudding is in the eating and many thousands of families throughout Limerick can testify that the meat being increasingly sold by the People's Co-operative is as good, if not superior to any meat being sold elsewhere in the City.

The history of the Masters Victullars shows that they have never been too fussy about hygiene. Their objections to the selling of meat by the People's Co-operative are based on purely economic grounds and have no connection whatever with health or hygiene regulations.

EDUCATION

A REPLY TO DR. NEWMAN

by JOE LITTLE

PART TWO

Dr. Newman has been speaking strictly as an educationalist; he is still doing so when he directs to the audience before him in Plassey "a mild word of caution ... to exercise care in the matter of taking up over-radical socio-political attitudes". He draws on the recent history of student movements, on the knowledge of educational sociologists, on the experience of a recent non-conformist movement and on the opinion of a Marxist revisionist for his evidence. Unfortunately, he sullies a potentially erudite discussion by appealing to the self-interest of the students while advising them on the subject of their social obligations. Why he did so only he can answer; if he is at all concerned about students helping to bring about economic and social change in this country, he must realise that they must do so in the sure knowledge that when sacrifices are to be made, those who benefit most from an unjust society must make the greatest sacrifices in a new and more just one. Surely it is evident to him that those who have passed through third-level educational institutes are, by and large, amongst the privileged in our society!

However, I would agree with him that students ought to be careful when taking up socio-political stances, especially if these stances are to have any practical effect on others (which is highly unlikely in this country in the present apathetic political climate). Be that as it may, care should be taken to base political attitudes on a thorough analysis of the society in which we live and of the position of the individual and of classes of persons vis-a-vis that social order. This analysis is never enough, even if it is the result of a lifetime's work: it must be coupled with an experience of this society as it operates on individuals and on classes, and tempered with an awareness of the degree to which the popular consciousness has been repressed. When Dr. Newman states that the task of criticising the institutions in a society is "pre-eminently that of the intellectual", he puts his finger on the crux of the problem. The very fact that our society needs to build the tower of intellectualism and to put a chosen few (usually those employed by its universities) at its top to do the job of thinking for everybody else, this fact is evidence of an impediment in our cultural web, the purpose of which is to deceive those who have very little in common with the prevailing cultural ethos (that of the rulers and of the economic superiors of society) into thinking that they have nothing of value to offer in the line of criticism of our institution.

As an example, I quote the phrase I most often heard when working in a pub: "D'ya hear yer man, what the hell does he know 'bout economics or inflation?" To which the true answer would be: "As much as any consumer and worker could know if he was allowed to voice his opinion and get a fair hearing". The point being that when students take up political stances, it is too often the result of purely academic pursuit during which they are exposed to a selection of dogma and isolated from the people. Such a stance may entitle them to join the elite of intellectuals in a battle for the minds of the people, but by its nature this form of conflict is a very denial of the person's right to be an agent of thought and action. Since this right is the basis of true communal democracy, the search for political stances within any third-level institution by students and academics (both of which are categories created by liberal democracies to give birth to and to nourish elitism) can render the drive for democratic revolution and for a revolution of democracy in favour of the oppressed masses, especially in the Third World and in the industries of the more affluent countries, hopeless and ineffective.

As Dr. Newman states, "students do not constitute a social

class": they should be aware, however, that they play a vital role in maintaining liberal democracy intact. Liberal democracy conflicts with true democracy insofar as it is elitist. The press is the mouthpiece of the elite as are the other media: it is either controlled by the political elite or by the economic elite, or else both share control. Education is the filter which connects the people required to run an economy and its social and cultural adjuncts, with the elite. The exam system ensures that the most capable rise into the upper ranks of a liberal democracy; when exams are combined with a reference system, the elite is usually not only capable but also monolithic: its chief preoccupation is to secure the basis of its own power. Such social engineering also guarantees economic rewards. Dr. Newman acknowledges this fact when he remarks that those who pass into the higher levels of the educational process in any country obtain higher material awards by virtue of this very fact; it is necessary to point out, however, that they achieve such rewards not solely because they are qualified (as the Bishop holds), but also because their very qualification demands subjection to an extremely thorough, albeit subtle, process of conditioning.

Students, therefore, in the N.I.H.E. and throughout the country should realise that the very institutes in which they work are hives of social manipulation, and are vital to those who wish to maintain or take over and sustain further our present manipulative society. Their present environments are the incubation chambers of institutional violence. If they consider for a moment two controversies raging at present in the halls of manipulative power, both concerning how the youth of this state are to be conditioned, they shall see more clearly what is being done to them: The first is over the issue of who should have the right to manipulate, the Church or the state's bureaucracy; and the second concerns the question of what should be the state's official history of itself. Neither are concerned with *WHETHER OR NOT* the youth of the state should be oppressed; all the excitement centres on the question of who should oppress them! Hence Dr. Newman's concern about the official world-view presented at the N.I.H.E. As he sees it, some "high-minded students" might get "carried away with revolutionary zeal" and upset the apple-cart by installing new task masters into the galley-ships of Ireland.

Do I hear the echoes of a Bismarkian war-scare? Limerick has had more than its quota of purges. I hasten to add that I stand for the abolition of task-mastery: I advocate the dissolution of manipulative education and through this, the inauguration of thought and action for the people by the people instead of government supposedly for the people by an elite which wins electoral approval only because of its ability to condition.

The liberation of education and the building of true democracy are obviously closely linked; each implies the other. To take stock of our present situation concerning the likelihood of liberation, I again turn to Dr. Newman's speech, particularly to the concluding paragraphs of his remarks as an educationalist (as opposed to his remarks as a Churchman which are, essentially, beyond the scope of this critique). He points to the danger of students being manipulated by "agencies outside the educational centres". In the case of the N.I.H.E., would the Church be embraced by this definition? My curiosity is aroused by the Bishop's diplomatic disposition: he seems to be referring from here out to Marxist organisations, yet he fails to mention them!

(To be concluded).

TELLING a lie cost Richard Nixon the Presidency of the United States of America. It wasn't so much telling the lie, but the fact that he was found out and tried to cover it up. In Limerick politics telling lies is nothing new.

The newspapers have told the story of how Mayor Pa Kennedy threw his weight — and vote — behind Mrs. Fanny Condell and had her elected to the City Health Committee, even though the City Council had unanimously nominated Mr. John Quinn for the vacancy. The Council, at a second meeting, further unanimously endorsed Quinn's nomination.

The City Council nomination duly went before the Mid-Western Health Board and as Pa is a member of this body he saw an opportunity of stopping the law clerk who works in Dessie O'Malley's office. And stop him he did.

Pa proposed MRs. Condell to fight it out against the man chosen by the City Council. In doing this Pa was going against a democratic decision of the City Council. But then, Pa has never allowed democracy to get in his way on occasions like this one. He has always behaved like a spoiled child ... wanting things his own way.

The reason for his opposition to Quinn can be seen on two levels. One is that Quinn is a Fianna Fail man and known to be an O'Malley's supporter. In the next local elections Quinn will almost certainly be nominated by Fianna Fail. So his being on the City Health Committee would have given him a platform to get the valuable publicity in the local papers. Pa was having none of it. He insisted that he was not at the meeting which selected Mr. Quinn. Within days it was proved that he had told a lie.

The wily Pa moved with speed, and quickly sought a way out. He then said that what he meant was that he had not attended the meeting of the City Council at which the names of those contesting the Health Committee seat were announced.

It was all to no avail. Under a savage attack from O'Malley, poor Pa's defence cracked.

But Kennedy had an unexpected ally at the City Health Committee meeting in the person of his Coalition colleague, Deputy S. Coughlan. Early on in the meeting Coughlan made his attitude clear when he welcomed Mrs. Condell. He stated:

She is a lady who has served her city well, and has devoted her time to the needy and afflicted. Unfortunately, I was not present at either of the meetings, but I was at the meeting of the Health Board where her appointment was carried by an overwhelming majority, but I was called away before that item was on the agenda. But I want to say here and now she would have got my support.

Shortly before the row between O'Malley and Kennedy, Mrs. Condell spoke from the public gallery and expressed her gratitude to Deputy Coughlan. "We are old friends", he replied. This "old friends" statement must surely have stuck in the craws of more than a few political observers in Limerick. The reply recalls another speech made by Coughlan over twelve years ago when he started to "congratulate" Fanny following her election as Mayor of Limerick, at a City Council meeting on June 29th 1962. After having referred to Councillor Paddy O'Sullivan (who had supported Mrs. Condell) as "the deuce of spades", Coughlan addressed his "old friend" and new Mayor, the Limerick Protestant, Mrs. Condell.

Coughlan: *It is plain and evident to me here to-night to see around here, somewhere in the air the remnants of the thirty pieces that were handed out many years ago ... it is evident to us all here who know anything about the history of our land that our forefathers before us refused to take the soup that was dished up to them ..*

Condell: *I am afraid I will have to leave the chamber if you do not sit down.*

Coughlan: *My hands are clean and I'll keep them that way.*

Condell: *I am, indeed, very sorry that such a note was introduced to this Council in the first five minutes of my Mayoralty. I will go further and say that I am a little appalled.*

Coughlan: *We are not responsible for our heritage.*

NO FLIES ON FANNY

With this disingenuous reply the exchanges came to an end. After the Mayoral election, in typical Limerick hypocritical style, all the Council Members lined up to congratulate the new Mayor as they filed out of the meeting. As Coughlan reached Mrs. Condell he was heard to remark: "It's all in the game".

Describing the scenes at the election a *Limerick Chronicle* reporter wrote on June 30th 1962: "Not since Adam Sarvant became first citizen in 1197 have such scenes been witnessed at the election".

MRs. Condell, a Ratepayers' Association representative, secured the support of the members of the Fianna Fail Party in defeating Councillor Paddy Kelly, an Irish Transport and General Workers' official for the Mayoralty by nine votes to eight. Mrs. Condell and her supporters were also able to induce Councillor Paddy O'Sullivan, Independent Labour, to vote against his trade union colleague. Her election was therefore, something of a turn-up for more than Coughlan's book.

The following year the Mayoral election was postponed for one week to enable the Mayor and Council to greet U.S. President, John F. Kennedy, on his visit to Limerick to become a Freeman of the City on June 29th 1963. In the days following John F. Kennedy's description of Mrs. Condell's address as "the finest speech he had heard on his European tour", the 1963 Mayoral stakes took on a new dimension. Her speech of welcome had been Fanny's finest hour and she intended to capitalise on it.

The Mayoral election took place on July 1st 1963 and entering the Council Chamber Rory Liddy, the Fianna Fail leader, (who with his colleagues had supported Fanny the previous year) confidently expected to be the new Mayor, with the support of Mrs. Condell. However, Fanny again turned the tables — and politicians — and, with the support of Deputy S. Coughlan and his Labour Party colleagues, she was re-elected. Coughlan made no effort to explain his about-face or his statements of the previous year. Turning to Rory Liddy, the defeated and shocked Fianna Fail candidate, Fanny gently consoled him with the words: "Sorry, Rory". (This demure gesture is called "cloaking the dagger" in political circles).

In becoming Mayor on two successive occasions as a lone Ratepayers' Association candidate, Mrs. Condell showed herself to be an astute and skilful politician. Her election to the City Health Committee is, therefore, consistent with her earlier tactical successes. When it comes to elections, it can certainly be said that there are no flies on Fanny.

But one question remains to be answered. What is the political tie-up between Fanny and Pa Kennedy? In her address of welcome to President Kennedy, Mrs. Condell mentioned that Pa was a cousin of the President and went on to refer to "a history of the United States that Patrick had written". A further plug for Pa appeared in the *Limerick Chronicle* article a week afterwards in which Pa was described as "one of the American President's most studious cousins." The article also mentioned that Pa was also engaged in the writing of another book on the genealogy of the Kennedy family. Needless to state, neither of these books has ever surfaced in the twelve years since the article was written. Pa also appears to have dropped his fictitious "cousin" claim.

Pa has kept on friendly terms with Fanny over the years. His cynical play for the Limerick Protestant vote by proposing out of the blue, and without any consultation with his Fine Gael party colleagues, that Dr. Wyse-Jackson be made a Freeman of Limerick on the occasion of his retirement as bishop also pleased Mrs. Condell. And so the City Health Committee incident can be seen as yet another round in the saga of the political relationship between Fanny and Pa.

'The Parish Pump'

A TASTE OF TREACY'S TRIPE PART FOUR

In Limerick, as elsewhere, food has always had class connotations. In the "bad old days" of the thirties, forties and fifties, "bones" of all shapes and descriptions — backbones, breastbones, eyebones, spare-ribs, strips, lots and knuckles — were familiar sights on the kitchen tables of those working class families fortunate enough to be able to afford them. Pigs' heads, tails and toes (crubeens) and sheep's heads and feet (trotters) were also eagerly devoured in many homes in those not too distant days.

But one unique Limerick dish — packet and tripe — has traditionally managed to transcend class barriers in the city. Mention of this combination is certain to bring a wistful longing to the eyes and palates of most exiled Limerickmen and is as emotive for these exiles as haggis is for the Scot, bubble and squeak for the Cockney or coddle for the Dublin man.

The heart of the packet and tripe industry has always been — and still is — St. Mary's Parish. Slattery's and O'Rourke's at the Island Road and Barrett's at the Sandmall were renowned packet and tripe house-factories earlier this century, whose products were sold from street tables in many parts of the city. Now, however, only one family remains in business carrying on the tradition in the most famous packet and tripe house of all — the one-storey cottage known as Treacy's, situated in a lane, off Athlunkard Street, deep down in the bowels of the "Isle". A latched doorway gives entrance to a cool, flagged kitchen, divided on one side by a wooden counter. An open yard and shed at the back complete the architectural picture of this modest Mecca.

Inside the house the honeycombs of tripe and large phallic tangles of packet are still kept in zinc basins on one side of the counter. The packet and tripe is cut off in lumps at the customers' request and flung expertly from about six feet into an old-fashioned weighing scale. The purchased lot is then unceremoniously wrapped in old copies of the *Limerick Leader* and carried home.

As its name indicates, Treacy's was originally owned by the family of that name. Later the packet and tripe factory was taken over by Jim "Packet" O'Halloran. O'Halloran is credited with being the author of that well-known Limerick expression: "Ten o'clock and not a belly in the house scraped yet". This remark is now usually related as a humorous story but it sounded less funny for the ten or so women who were employed scraping the bellies of the sheep in his cold yard for a few shillings a week. O'Halloran became a wealthy man by selling packet and tripe, and when the new St. Mary's Catholic Church was built in the early thirties, he presented a set of expensive Stations of the Cross to the Church.

Jim O'Halloran also had a song written about his tripe, the words of which started: "Jim Packet, Jim Packet, your tripe is so green, the finest in Ireland that ever was seen".

The taste for packet and tripe is, apparently, an acquired one, and "outsiders" usually cannot stand the appearance or flavour of this dish. The green-coloured, pleated, accordion-like tripe is part of the sheep's belly which, having been washed and scraped, is sold in its raw state.

Packet is a type of blood-sausage or pudding and is dark-brown in colour. Blood from the sheep is poured into the sheep's intestines and spices are added. In the past milk, onions and tansy were also included. The mixture is then boiled in a big vat and the cluster of long, jelly-like lengths and are placed in containers, ready for sale.

One method of cooking tripe is to chop it up into small cubes and steep it overnight in salted water. This water is drained off, or the tripe can be boiled in the same water. The tripe is boiled a second time in milk and onion is added. The

packet is cut into slivers and also added at this stage. When the dish is simmering gently, it is thickened with breadcrumbs and flavoured with a big nob of country butter.

After about fifteen minutes, during which time the tea is made, "drawn" strong, and served with bread and country butter, the packet and tripe is ready for eating. The use of Cleve's condensed milk was reputed to give the meal an extra flavour. Some of the more sophisticated "Parishioners" have been known to add a spoon of curry to give a further exotic touch to the occasion.

Packet and tripe, washed down with strong, sweet tea, has been found to be easily digestible and rests gently on the stomach, especially one ravaged by an excess of alcohol. For this reason the dish is very much in demand after a weekend "feed of porter" has rendered the stomach hostile to other more abrasive forms of nourishment. So packet and tripe has traditionally been a weekend treat in Limerick, a distinctive Saturday night, Sunday morning ritual.

But Treacy's also provided many other delights for local epicures. The phrase used by these gourmets to describe the array was "buck, reed and belly". The little-known buck is part of the sheep's digestive system. The grisly reed, when grilled, has the appearance of an aborted foetus.

But the belly was considered to be the most rare delicacy of all. The nuns at St. Mary's Convent were very partial to packet and tripe and a large zinc bathful was unfailingly delivered to the convent on Sundays. A special belly was scraped for this occasion and a customer "well in" enough with Treacy's might, on rare occasions and as a great favour, get a piece of the much-coveted "nuns' belly".

Another popular Treacy's special were the sheep's feet or trotters. They are now no longer sold there, mainly because of the long, hard work in their preparation. The trotters were extremely difficult to clean, as the thick covering of wool had to be completely removed from the feet before they were boiled. Thirty years ago a familiar sight was the processions through the "Parish" on Saturday evenings of long lines of boys and women carrying plates, bowls and other receptacles. These crowds converged on Treacy's, where their orders were taken and their plates handed in overnight, having first been marked with each person's name. On Sunday morning the trotter-filled plates were collected in time for breakfast. The trotters sold at 2d each.

The oil from the trotters was also sold on the premises as a hair restorative. It is unlikely that this oil was much use for restoring hair but it must have made some novel patterns on pillowcases. Still, a lucky "Parish" man could have a Saturday tea of grilled reed, followed by a half-dozen pints and a sing-song at Angela Conway's, go home to a late-night packet and tripe supper and dine on a dish of cold, boiled trotters on Sunday morning. In the poverty-stricken, religion dominated Limerick of the time, it could, at least, be said that the packet and tripe culture helped to make life a little bit more bearable for many people.

(To be continued).

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